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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Urgent need to increase French content on the Internet: The Commissioner of Official Languages receives a response from the Government of Canada

The Commissioner of Official Languages, Dr. Dyane Adam welcomed the government response to the special study, *The Government of Canada and French on the Internet*. This study, which was made public by the Commissioner last August 30, was a call for immediate and targeted action by the Government of Canada to close gaps in usage and develop a critical mass of content and services in French on the Internet.

Dr. Adam notes that the government will develop a coherent action plan accompanied by deadlines, follow-up mechanisms and regular progress reports in order to increase as quickly as possible, the content and services available in French on the Internet. Some of the elements of the government's response refer to programs that have been publicly announced since the Commissioner's study was tabled, most notably in the Speech from the Throne. Dr. Adam is particularly pleased to see that the Government clearly states that "the development of the Information Highway in Canada must include respect for the two official languages, both in terms of communications between the federal government and Canadian citizens on the Internet and of government policies to increase Internet content."

This remains an urgent, priority issue for the Commissioner, who intends to closely follow the implementation of the government's initiatives. The public is also invited to comment and submit suggestions on the issue of French on the Internet through the Commissioner's Internet site.

"At this, the beginning of my mandate as Commissioner of Official Languages, I am encouraged to see in the government's reply a gesture that is more than symbolic", indicated Dr. Adam. "I will, of course, continue to work to ensure that these initiatives truly become reality as soon as possible."

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Information

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